GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
FINANCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:779
ANSWERED ON:24.07.2015
Smuggling of Cigarettes and Foreign Currency
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Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a spurt in the smuggling of goods, particularly foreign brand cigarettes and foreign currency;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise via airports, seaports, roads along with the reasons therefor;

(c) whether punitive action has been initiated by the Government against offenders, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the other steps being taken by the Government to prevent/check smuggling in the country including metro cities?

Answer

The MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JAYANT SINHA)

(a) Yes. Going by the seizures made by Customs field formations as indicated below, there seems to be a spurt in the smuggling of foreign brand cigarettes and foreign currency:

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Year Quantity of Cigarettes of foreign brands seize Value of Foreign Currency Seized
(In Thousands) (Equivalent Value in Rs. Lakh)
2012-13 51768.88 453.46
2013-14 26435.92 1382.94
2014-15 114330 2889.288
2015-16 to date 55890.06 718.89
Total 248424.86 5444.578
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(b) and (c) The details of cases booked in respect of smuggling of foreign brand cigarettes and foreign currency (year-wise, State/UT-wise via airports, seaports and roads) for the last three years and the current year and the punitive action initiated by the Department as per the Customs Act, 1962 are at Annexure-A.

(d) All the Customs field formations including Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) have been alerted and sensitized to remain more vigilant to prevent smuggling of goods including foreign brand cigarettes and foreign currency. Alerts and modus operandi circulars are issued by DRI to field formations. Strict surveillance is maintained and special watch is kept at sensitive places. Inter-agency coordination with other agencies is also being maintained for greater exchange of intelligence inputs to keep a check on smuggling activities.